Opposition to Keiro Sites Remain. 

A New Heart Mountain Podcast Set to Premiere. 

A new documentary reveals the man behind his iconic movie role.
JACL LEGACY FUND GRANTS
2021 PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENT

By JACL National

The JACL Legacy Fund Grants Committee is pleased to announce that applications are now being accepted for 2021 Legacy Fund grants. LFG Co-Chairs Roberta Barton and Toshi Abe encourage JACL chapters in good standing and JACL District Councils to apply. This year, the maximum grant award is $6,000.

Legacy Fund grants will be awarded for projects and activities that support the mission of JACL and are supportive of the National JACL Strategic Plan. Instructions and application forms can be downloaded from JACL’s website at https://jacl.org/legacy-fund-grants.

Legacy Fund grants recipients from the 2019 JACL National Convention in Salt Lake City.

PHOTO: PACIFIC CITIZEN

The Legacy Fund was established by the JACL National Council at the 1990 JACL National Convention in San Diego. Much of the original funds were donated by JACL members who gave portions of their redress awards to further the legacy of the JACL. Each year, a portion of the earnings from the Legacy Fund Endowment provides the funds to run the LFG program.

For questions or additional information, please contact Roberta Barton (rbarton4106@comcast.net) and Toshi Abe (tabe@jacl.org). Completed application submissions are due by May 1. Grant award recipients will be announced at this year’s upcoming JACL National Convention.

JACL Promotes Program Director and We’re Hiring!

By JACL National

JACL is pleased to announce the promotion of Phillip Ozaki to Program Director — membership and fund development. Ozaki has served on staff for a cumulative four years, including as membership coordinator and Norman Y Mineta Fellow.

Ozaki has extensive fundraising experience and is a founding board member of the National Queer Asian Pacific Islander Alliance. He also brings work experience at several tech companies and an MBA from ESADE Business School in Spain.

Ozaki wrote to JACL National, “First of all, I’m proud to announce that membership revenue grew in 2020 — thank you! We could not have done that without you! I’m honored to take on this challenging new role to carry on my grandparents’ legacy and because we all know that JACL has a lot to offer. It’s time to engage new funding partners to reinvigorate current programs and innovate new ones. If you’re interested in joining a fundraising initiative, please reach out to me at pozaki@jacl.org.”

JACL is now looking actively to hire a membership coordinator. “It’s a great time to work in the movement for social justice and in the Japanese American community,” Ozaki wrote. “Plus, you get to work with our awesome volunteers (and youth) while developing highly sought fundraising skills.”

To view the full JACL membership coordinator job posting, please visit the JACL website at www.jacl.org.

I’m glad to see the Pacific Citizen growing and evolving with its website, and especially LOVE the much easier-to-navigate digital archives. It’s a treasure trove for JAs to learn about our community’s history, and for scholars and journalists looking to connect the past with the present. Thanks for the improvements, P.C.!” — Gil Asakawa
From the Executive Director

RACISM ISN'T ALWAYS OBVIOUSLY INTENTIONAL, BUT TAKING RESPONSIBILITY IS

By David Inoue, JAACL Executive Director

Every Feb. 19, we take time to recall this as the day in 1942 that President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, which eventually paved the way for the mass incarceration of nearly 120,000 men, women and children of Japanese descent.

One very important point about EO9066 is that nowhere in the order can you find the word Japanese. This is especially important in the context of 11th-hour proposed revisions by the Justice Department to change the interpretation of Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. This section of the law bars discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin by recipients of federal funding and has traditionally recognized the effect of disparate impact in discrimination when obvious intent to discriminate may not be readily discernible.

When we discuss EO9066, we are always very clear that the intent was to discriminate against Japanese and Japanese Americans, and this was borne out in later revelations of uncovered documents, but the argument could be made that the law was based entirely on the intent of preserving national security. Clearly, the impact was focused on our community, and that is where questions of disparate impact are important to discerning the impact of policy.

We see disparate impact now most often in voting laws today. Efforts to increase voting security invariably lead to reduction in the ability of minority communities to vote. Voter ID laws can serve as a poll tax, requiring voters to seek out an approved ID, which may have certain costs to obtain.

While many people have a driver’s license, this still predates that someone drives, not always the case for someone living in an urban area with public transit. Gerrymandering and redistricting are another way that minority votes are diluted in value when packed into supermajority urban districts.

Ironically, the impact is more closely aligned with the original Constitutional intent of preserving the superior rights of land and then also slave-owning white men. When we live under the same laws, how those laws are applied can be very different depending on the color of our skin. The Stanford Open Policing Project last year completed an analysis of 100 million policing traffic stops and confirmed the anecdotal stories of what it means to be driving while Black, that Black people are 20 percent more likely to be involved in a traffic stop. Once that stop happens, it can also end in tragedy as in the case of Philando Castile.

As we talk about disparate impact vs. intent, it is useful to refer back to the Constitution. The 3/5 clause is famous for its valuation of slaves at a portion of free people. Nowhere does that mention the race of who a slave was, though it does explicitly state that nontax-paying Indians were not to be included in population counts for apportionment. However, there was essentially only one race to which slaves belonged, and that was Black.

For most of us, we can legitimately say that we try not to be intentionally racist. But that is not enough. On its face, EO9066 is not intentionally racist, it is only with the context of how it was implemented we see the racist impact. The Constitution, our drug laws, traffic laws and the like are on the surface, nonrace specific, but in implementation affect different racial groups very differently.

It is time we fully reckon with the disparate impact of our policies today and in the past. A full reckoning requires us to provide redress. Our government did this in 1988 with the passage of Japanese American redress.

It is time for our government to do the same for Blacks who were wronged by slavery, Jim Crow and even today by the disparate impact of policies that surgically target and oppress Black communities.

Taking responsibility for mistakes should never come easy. It shouldn’t necessarily be thought of as punishment, but there should be cost. For Japanese American redress, the cost to our country was over $1.6 billion. What would be the cost of compensating those historically and currently wronged by slavery and its legacy? HR40 is the clearest path to making that determination so that we can be held accountable as a country.

As we remember our own experience as a Japanese American community, we must place our experience in the context of the long moral, or perhaps immoral, arc of our country, and ensure that we all take responsibility for the legacies of historic wrongs and seek to right them in the present before it is too late for another generation.

David Inoue is executive director of the JAACL. He is based in the organization’s Washington, D.C., office.

Nikkei Voice

CORKY LEE, THE MOST IMPORTANT ASIAN AMERICAN PHOTOGRAPHER THAT PEOPLE DIDN’T KNOW ABOUT

By Gil Asakawa

A great American photographer died on Jan. 27 at a hospital in Queens, N.Y., his hometown. But you might not recognize his name: Corky Lee.

Like the subject of his half-century career, Asians in America, who have historically been invisible to mainstream Americans, Corky was invisible — he didn’t seek the spotlight, he just wanted to record the community around him.

Most people wouldn’t have known him. But along with Asian American activists and journalists across the country, my wife and I knew him, and when I learned that he had died of Coronavirus-19, I was devastated by the loss.


Corky chronicled the rise of the Asian American movement from a New York City perspective since the 1970s, and he tirelessly championed Asian American social justice. He chronicled the everyday lives of the Asian community and attended many (I think maybe every) march

and protest that included Asians or Asian Americans.

I mainly knew him through the Asian American Journalists Assn., and my wife and I met him years ago when he came to Denver for an OCA-JAACL banquet during which a photo of his was auctioned off. Erin and I were emcees for that banquet.

The photo was a commemoration of the completion of the Transcontinental Railroad, which was built on the backs of thousands of Chinese laborers (many died along the way) but the Chinese were told they couldn’t attend the completion ceremony. So, the famous photo of the two locomotives meeting at Promontory Point, Utah, had no Chinese faces in it at all. Google “Transcontinental Railroad Promontory Point Utah” and see for yourself.

In typical fashion, Corky decided to stage his own history lesson and captured assembled of AAPIs and the descendants of the original laborers at the same spot. He was single-minded that way, and so persistent that history should be kept honest, not whitewashed. He called his life’s work, “Photographic Justice,” and it was.

New York filmmaker Jennifer Takaki, a friend of Corky’s, has been working on a documentary, “Photographic Justice: The Corky Lee Story” for years, and I’m looking forward to seeing how the photographer was captured by the filmmaker. It’s sure to be a chronicle of the Asian community, not just of the man because he was such an omnipresent figure in the community.

In a memorable trip, Corky came to Colorado to shoot portraits of two men who shared history but probably had never met. Erin and I knew John Yee, the longtime Denver educator who had served with the acclaimed “Flying Tigers” squadron of fighter planes based in Kunming, China, during World War II. And we knew George “Joe” Sakato, a Medal of Honor recipient who fought in the famous 442nd Regimental Combat Team.

Sakato was in the terrible battle in France toward the end of the war, when Japanese American soldiers rescued the Texas “Lost Battalion” that had been surrounded by the...
Actor Tamlyn Tomita, clad in PPE gear, makes a defiant and impassioned speech to keep Pacifica Cos. LLC from possibly evicting elderly residents of the Sakura ICF in Boyle Heights after Feb. 1.

Actor Tamlyn Tomita (left) and PSW District Gov. Nancy Takayama both spoke out in favor of extending the now-expired five-year moratorium that prevents changes to the culturally sensitive care received by residents of the four former Keiro facilities. 

PHOTOS: PACIFIC CITIZEN

OPPOSITION TO PLANS FOR FORMER KEIRO SITES REMAIN AS FEB. 1 DEADLINE ARRIVES

A pair of petitions aim to stall, stop the scenario that was set in motion in 2016.

By P.C. Staff

With just days to go before the arrival of a Feb. 1 deadline set five years ago, an ad hoc group of community activists calling themselves SOS (Save Our Seniors) staged a cacophonous rally on Jan. 26 outside the Sakura Intermediate Care Facility in Los Angeles’ Boyle Heights neighborhood, east of downtown Los Angeles.

At stake: the future of the facility’s 64 residents — average age 92 — living at the ICF. According to actor Tamlyn Tomita, who was one of the many speakers that day, the situation is bigger than the fate of those residents.

“It is not just a Japanese American issue,” Tomita said, referring to the rise of gentrification that has not spared Boyle Heights. “It is a neighborhood, community issue.”


Tomita asserted, “Pacifica has broken its promises agreed to and subsequently chipped away at our nation’s only Japanese bilingual and bicultural character of food, activities, music, sound, stories, restricted rent increases, no leasing, rebuilding, changing, selling or reduction of services — and especially at this time of the Covid pandemic.”

Supportive statements from Assemblyman Al Muratsuchi and L.A. City Councilman Kevin De Leon were also read.

One of the most pressing concerns of SOS now with regard to the Sakura ICF is the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic and how the disease it causes, Covid-19, is especially deadly to the elderly, according to Monkawa, who spoke to the Pacific Citizen prior to the rally.

According to Monkawa, who is also a member of the Community Advisory Board (CAB) of the Keiro Pacifica properties, moving those 64 elderly ICF residents from the facility — which has been kept “Covid free” during the lockdown — would be especially detrimental to their health.

“Today is in contrast to news reports of outbreaks of Covid-19 at Kei-Ai Los Angeles and Kei-Ai South Bay, which have resulted in several deaths.”

“We on the Community Advisory Board have sent a letter [to the California Attorney General’s Office] saying we believe the seniors deserve to have their conditions extended because the promises that were given to them to keep things status quo for five years were broken,” Monkawa said. The California A.G.’s Office brokered the 13-point conditions of sale in 2016.

Among the alleged broken promises: a decrease in bilingual staff and services, as well as a decrease in programs, Monkawa said. Another change: He said that there has been an increase in Medicare beds and a decrease in Medi-Cal beds. Medicare beds “bring in revenue of $600 per day person” vs. the Medi-Cal beds, which “bring in $200,” Monkawa said.

Monkawa also said that in 2018 and 2019, “Pacifica failed in the compli-ance report with how well they’re going to stick with the conditions of sale.” He also cited how there was a failure to repair an elevator “for several months” and the cancelation of a “company store” without notifying the residents.

See OPPOSITION on page 8

STACI TOJI, ESQ.
TOJI LAW, APC
Estate Planning for the Generations
3655 Torrance Blvd., Suite 300 | Torrance, CA 90503
(424) 247-1123 | staci@tojilaw.com | www.tojilaw.com
LIVING TRUSTS | WILLS | POWERS OF ATTORNEY
When I first visited Heart Mountain during the annual pilgrimage in the summer of 2018, I would not have guessed that several years later, I would be given the opportunity to produce a podcast series about the camp. Then again, so much of the last year has become unpredictable with the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, which resulted in both a spike in anti-Asian violence and civil unrest in our country.

This series is not meant to tell the story of Heart Mountain incarceration from start to finish, but rather reflects on what daily camp life was like for the people who were incarcerated in a degree of detail that I am hoping to capture through the stories of Heart Mountain incarcerees in a degree of detail that has never been done in the podcast format before.

Looking at the name of the series, "Look Toward The Mountain," the name comes from a phrase used in Heart Mountain’s camp newspaper, the Sentinel, in its inaugural edition on Oct. 24, 1942. The editorial team revealed how they came up with their name in the following excerpt:

"Where did they turn for inspiration? They obeyed the age-old adage — ‘Look toward the mountains, Heart Mountain, of course, the natural source of spiritual and artistic inspiration.’"

We chose this title because it referenced a unique story from Heart Mountain, as the Sentinel played an important role in daily camp life and is generally acknowledged as the highest-quality newspaper published in the 10 WRA camps. The editorial team’s reasoning also encapsulates the overarching theme that I am hoping to capture through this podcast.

The forced removal and wartime incarceration were clearly unjust racially motivated violations of our civil liberties that traumatized generations of Japanese Americans. But the camps themselves, and particularly Heart Mountain, it seems, were places where community existed and even thrived, demonstrating the best of Japanese American innovation, creativity and resilience.

The series is not meant to tell the comprehensive story of wartime incarceration from start to finish, but rather focuses on the individual experiences that add depth to the understanding of what daily camp life was like for the people who lived through it.

We do this by integrating audio samples from oral history recordings housed in the Densho collection, along with new interviews with Heart Mountain incarceration survivors. Inspired by the radio plays of the 1940s that would have been popular at the time of the incarceration, many written documents such as court testimonies, business and personal correspondence, newspaper editorials and diaries have been incorporated into the series with the help of HMWF Board Member Darrell Kunitomi.

Kunitomi is a Heart Mountain descendent and also a member of the Grateful Crane Ensemble, a musical theater troupe based out of Los Angeles’ Little Tokyo, who has helped source voice actors to bring the many text-based additions to life.

Ray Locker has been my partner in crime when it comes to researching and writing the scripts for narrating each episode. He has a background in journalism as a political correspondent at USA Today and has been a member of the HMWF team for several years. Locker’s journalistic approach helped to unearth a treasure trove of lesser-known stories from the camp years and others that deepen our understanding of well-known topics.

For my part, though I have spent much of my professional career studying and writing about topics related to the wartime incarceration, this was the first project I have worked on that necessitated such a detailed research into daily life in camp.

I have come away from it with a more nuanced understanding of the period and am equipped with even more reasons why this issue was such a travesty of justice. It has also given me great joy to make use of my skills as a musician to do some light soundtrack work on the series, including the theme song, which features both guitar and shamisen instrumentation — in what I hope evokes a blend of Japanese and Western tradition reflected in the lives of many incarcerees.

This project has not been without its challenges. For starters, living in a busy city like Philadelphia, finding ways to record high-quality audio without interruption from neighbors’ construction projects and passing traffic proved difficult.

As someone who typically works in the written word, these were issues I had never dealt with previously. Not to mention the fact that my wife, Cathy, and I welcomed our first son, Mateo Masaki, into the world in mid-October. Finding time to record and edit each episode around his naps, feeding and changing schedule was also a challenge.
Pat Morita and Ralph Macchio

By P.C. Staff

Cobra Kai! "Cobra Kai!" "Cobra Kai!"

Since Jan. 1, there’ve been millions of eyeballs trained on “Cobra Kai” and the launch of its third season on Netflix. But in case you don’t subscribe to the streaming service, “Cobra Kai” is a TV series that revisits some of the characters introduced in the 1984 motion picture "The Karate Kid." As for whether it was worth putting in four years of his life to relay a story that, when the project began, might not have seemed like an obvious choice, Derek wrote, “Yes! I learned a great deal about this wonderful person and met many people along the way that I wouldn’t have if it wasn’t because of this project.”

The success and timing of “Cobra Kai” was an unplanned boon to "More Than Miyagi" — and Derek could’t be happier.

“The interest in Pat Morita was always there, but I think the popularity of ‘Cobra Kai’ has made the younger generation more aware of who he is, and I think the timing is perfect for Season 3 is looking to honor Mr. Miyagi’s legacy as Ralph Macchio’s character makes a soul-searching pilgrimage to Miyagi’s homeland in Okinawa,” Derek wrote.

“It’s perfect timing,” Alvarez told the Pacific Citizen, adding that no one saw coming this fortuitous turn of events. That said, he asserted that “Cobra Kai” could not have succeeded without the original “Karate Kid” — and the four-movie original “Karate Kid” franchise would not have succeeded the way it did without Pat Morita.

Morita, who prior to the breakthrough role in “Karate Kid,” was most-famous for this role as Arnold in the “Happy Days” TV sitcom during the 1970s, famously received a career highlight best supporting Oscar nomination for his depiction of Miyagi. (That Oscar went to Dr. Haing S. Ngor for his role in “The Killing Fields.”)

What the documentary reveals, however, in addition to the professional triumphs are the many personal tragedies, tribulations and setbacks that Morita mostly overcame — but, unfortunately, not all, and not the least of which was alcoholism. “More Than Miyagi!” doesn’t pull any second acts in that part of the book.

“Everyone knows that Pat had an alcohol problem,” Derek wrote. “I’m sure people can relate to this because there is at least one person in every family that has some sort of addiction. Pat Morita’s wife explains it by saying, ‘I’ve always known alcoholism is a disease, and I never stopped loving him. You don’t stop loving someone just because they have cancer.’

Perhaps some of the roots for Morita’s excesses can be traced to his childhood experiences.

As a boy, Noriyuki Morita contracted spinal tuberculosis and spent years of his young life — including time being confined in a full-body cast — in a sanatorium until an experimental surgery succeeded in giving him back some semblance of having a normal life.

Then, when he could be released at age 9, with the U.S. at war with the Axis powers, that normal life meant leaving the safe confines of a children’s hospital to join his family at one of America’s concentration camps with thousands of other Japanese Americans.

There were other familial traumas revealed in the documentary that also undoubtedly took a collective toll on the young Noriyuki Morita. Alvarez even wondered how was he able to not break and be driven to commit suicide — though one might wonder if Morita’s substance abuse problems were, in actuality, a slow-motion form of that unfortunate action.

Using Morita’s own voice, as well as archival footage of Morita’s TV and movie appearances, “More Than Morita” tells of the comic actor’s career and personal struggles, steadily propelled by his standup comedy career, a trajectory he took in his 30s after securing a career in the aerospace industry.

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF LOVE PROJECT FILMS

Documentary Tells Pat Morita’s Triumphs, Tragedies

‘More Than Miyagi’ reveals the man behind the magical movie role.

By P.C. Staff

Evelyn and Pat Morita on their wedding day
It was a brave leap of faith for anyone to take and even more unusual for a Japanese American, if the number of successful Japanese American comedians is any indication.

Commenting on that career rise and personal fall are several people who either knew or worked with Morita or were impacted by his life, including Macchio and Zabka, as well as actors Martin Kove, Esai Morales and James Hong, fellow comedian Tommy Chong, “Karate Kid” scribe Robert Mark Kamen and more. Even Henry Winkler, who famously played an equally iconic character in “Happy Days” (Arthur “Fonzie” Fonzarelli) weighs in compassionately on Morita’s battles.

Unimaginable as it may seem now, the documentary also explains how Morita had to audition over and over again to convince producer Jerry Weintraub to award him the role. The superproducer couldn’t imagine the comedian, who billed himself as “the hip Nip,” had what it took to play the role.

Pat Morita, with an assist from director John Avildsen, proved Weintraub, who originally wanted the celebrated Japanese actor Mifune Toshiro for the part, wrong.

With “More Than Morita” debuting on several streaming services as a video-on-demand title, one almost inexplicable absence is that of Netflix, which ran Derek and Alvarez’s previous documentary, “The Real Miyagi.” With “Cobra Kai” among its offerings, it would seem like a natural fit and the service could have had it exclusively to itself.

That was not, perplexingly, the case. According to Alvarez, Netflix sent an email saying, in effect, that the documentary didn’t fit its criteria.

“They never give you a full explanation,” he said.

That aside, both Derek and Alvarez are stoked for the potential success of “More Than Miyagi” — and Netflix is still helping out, indirectly.

The payoff is especially poignant for Derek, who himself studied karate with Fumio Demura.

“I had met Pat back in 1983, and back then, I’d only known him as Arnold on ‘Happy Days.’ Just the brief moment I had with him — you could feel what a kind, gentle soul he was,” said Derek.

Alvarez concurred.

“I want to share this with the world, and they’re going to see who Pat really was,” he said. “Yes, there’s a dark side to him, but he was a kind person, and he was very funny and compassionate. He had a tough life, and I hope the movie resonates with everyone.”

Now that the movie is done, Derek said he had one wish.

“I just wish Pat was still here with us, so I could’ve personally interviewed him and dove in deeper with the questions because there are a lot of aspects and reasons for the choices that he made that no one can answer other than him.”

(For anyone interested in buying “More Than Miyagi” on physical media rather than via streaming, it can be purchased on DVD or Blu-ray at morethanmiyagi.com.)
OPPOSITION » continued from page 4

There are also problems with Pacifica at other former Keiro facilities, Monkawa said, citing a California Department of Health report showing spikes in patient care violations at the South Bay Kei-Ai and the Lincoln Heights Kei-Ai.

“Based on those things, we believe the seniors deserve an extension,” Monkawa said. As for the duration of an extension, he said, “We’re willing to negotiate.”

One possible wrinkle with having the California Attorney General’s Office take action on the matter: the current A.G., Xavier Becerra, has been nominated to serve as the Secretary of Heath and Human Services under the recently inaugurated President Biden — which might mean the Pacifica matter could fall through the cracks.

Nevertheless, Councilman de Leon sent a letter to Attorney General Becerra on Jan. 14 urging that he “take another look at this proposed transition in light of this unprecedented pandemic and extend the current conditions to permit the current residents to continue receiving care . . .”

Also on the political front, Assemblyman Muratsuchi in December announced he would introduce legislation to block Pacifica’s plan to move forward with its conversion plans. Included in that bill would be a provision requiring the owner of facility like former Keiro properties to provide at least six months of advance notice to residents of a facility like the Sakura ICF.

The political actions came about after Pacifica, in the fall of 2020, applied to the Los Angeles City Planning Commission to convert the ICF into apartments, which was the impetus for the first petition to prevent that from happening.

The Boyle Heights Neighborhood Council’s Planning and Land Use Committee later came out opposed unanimously to Pacifica’s proposal for the Sakura ICF.

The chair of the CAB, Dr. Kenneth Hayashida, told the Pacific Citizen prior to the rally that Pacifica has been uncooperative and that among the conditions of sale was a requirement that it submit annual reports for review.

“The companies are supposed to be sending reports to our board to have me, as the chairman, and the board certify that they are complete and accurate and reflective of what’s going on,” Hayashida said. “Well, the board for two years has not approved those reports because they were felt to be incomplete.”

Speaking at the rally, JACL PSW District Gov. Takayama relayed how she had been present at last fall’s Boyle Heights Neighborhood Council Planning and Land Use meeting, when a Pacifica representative presented its plans for the current Sakura Gardens site.

When the representative was asked where would the current residents be placed, Takayama said, the answer was that some residents, if they are able, can be placed in other rooms on the campus, and others would be relocated outside Sakura Gardens.

A follow-up question was asked whether the residents would still get the same care necessary care and, if relocated outside Sakura Gardens, would they go to a home that was culturally sensitive and honored the five-year agreement. According to Takayama, the answers to both questions were unsatisfactory.

“It was very obvious that no thought was given to the care of these residents,” Takayama said. She added that several JACL chapters, including SELANOCC, Greater Los Angeles, San Fernando, Twin Cities JACL in Minnesota and Mile-Hi in Denver, support an extension of the five-year agreement.

The National JACL provided the following statement regarding the situation, which was supposed to be included in the Tuesday rally but was overlooked.

“One of the fights JACL joined in years ago was to highlight importance of culturally and linguistically appropriate services to Asian and Asian American communities. For individuals with limited English proficiency, health outcomes are proven to be improved when services are received in the preferred language other than English, and diet and activities of daily living are done with sensitivity to the individual’s cultural background.

“Originally part of Keiro organization, Sakura Gardens was part of a comprehensive network of culturally proficient services for aging members of the Japanese American community in Southern California for over 50 years. With the sale of Keiro’s final remaining properties in 2016, Pacifica Companies took ownership and management of Sakura Gardens with the promise of at least five years of continued service to its residents.

“Unfortunately, that five years is coming to an end and Pacifica is asking to convert the facility to mixed-use housing for families and a parking garage.

“Sakura Gardens is emblematic of a growing problem in the downtown and East L.A. area and across the nation as ethnic enclaves are being replaced by gentrification. The Covid pandemic has exacerbated the strain on neighborhoods like Little Tokyo and Boyle Heights, as we continue to lose the foundational community businesses and residents that made the communities what they are today.

“Sakura Gardens has been a key part of that fabric both to the Boyle Heights community and what continues to our nation’s largest Japanese America community South California for over 50 years.

“The threat of the Covid pandemic is felt even greater for the residents of Sakura Gardens as restrictions on programming and shifts in staffing and residents served have applied further stress upon the residents.

“Now the threat of removal from their homes due to the proposed changes is unconscionable during a pandemic whose impact has been most acutely felt in the senior community served by Sakura Gardens.

“We call upon Pacifica Companies to pause and take stock of the dangers of proceeding with the closure to its residents, to whom they remain obligated as caregivers. Pacifica must work with greater transparency with the community that has supported Sakura Gardens for its 50 years of existence to ensure the community’s needs are served.

“Sakura Gardens was founded on the mission to honor our community elders. Pacifica should honor that original mission to serve its residents and ensure their safety throughout the ongoing pandemic. We hope that all interested parties recognize the importance of Sakura Gardens to the immediate Boyle Heights neighborhood and the local Japanese American community and find a way to continue to serve our seniors through the established Sakura Gardens model of care.”

Hayashida called Pacifica’s behavior “kind of shocking,” especially in light of how some of the Japanese Americans who would be impacted by being relocated from the Sakura ICF were alive when Japanese Americans were forcibly relocated during WWII.

“You’re talking about the very people who were let down by Earl Warren when he was the attorney general of California in 1941, 1942 and then when he was governor-elect and governor in 1942, when Earl Warren and the state of California turned their back on the civil rights of Japanese Americans in Southern California.”

CORKY LEE » continued from page 3

The memorial has etched in it all the men who served in the U.S. military, WWII veterans on the front and all the men since then (including my father, who served in the Korean War) etched on the back. There, Joe Sakato posed next to the name of his friend and pointed to it: Saburo Tanamachi. I don’t know if any of their portraits ever made it into any of Corky’s last exhibits.

As I wrote in my Facebook post, “I’ll miss his eye, talent and saucy New York accent and quick smile and laughter. Take great pictures in the next world, Corky. RIP in this one.”

This project also challenged me to confront certain blind spots that I had in my knowledge of the camps, which was largely remedied by working with a variety of subject matter experts who taught us their perspectives whenever needed. I don’t want to give too much away, but I offer the following brief synopsis of some key topics discussed in the series.

Beginning with the first two episodes, we explore the origins of the Japanese American community — their immigration stories and first decades in the country prior to forced removal and mass incarceration at Heart Mountain, profiling the regions they came from and certain key individuals whose stories will be further expanded on throughout the series.

We also devoted an entire episode to the history of Northwestern Wyoming in the Bighorn Basin, where Heart Mountain was located, exploring the stories of the indigenous peoples who first inhabited the land and the white Americans who pushed them out during the Westward Expansion (including Wild West legend Buffalo Bill Cody) in order to better contextualize the setting of the stories to come.

Episodes 3-5 of the series detail how the incarceree population established some sense of normalcy amidst the deeply traumatic experience by re-creating daily routines from their lives outside of camp — things like school, work, worship services, shopping and the like that gave life its usual rhythm.

One of my favorite episodes is the fourth, titled “Prison Food,” in which we do a deep dive into food culture at camp and the many creative solutions incarcerees found to produce dishes that resembled their prewar diet.

Two episodes in the middle of the season presented my greatest personal challenge, as it required me to be objective in my description of JACL’s wartime collaboration with the War Relocation Authority.

Episode 6 explores the organized resistance to the draft by Heart Mountain’s Fair Play Committee, while Episode 7 tells the story of volunteers and draftres who enlisted to serve in the 442nd Regimental Combat Team.

I can think of few better locations from which to tell this story, given that Heart Mountain was both the only camp with a formal committee of draft resisters who were jailed en masse and the only camp with its own USO center.

In these and other episodes, I was also confronted by my own bias related to a pivotal figure at Heart Mountain — Bill Hosokawa, editor-in-chief of the Sentinel newspaper. Although I never met Bill, he was a friend of my family for many years. Reading through his editorials while conducting research on camp life, I came to realize that I would have likely disagreed with many of his viewpoints, which during his years at Heart Mountain at least were decidedly assimilationist and generally touted government propaganda lines.

In addition to the episodes exploring the divisiveness that the government sowed with its so-called Loyalty Questionnaire and subsequent military draft, Episode 8 titled, “Crime and Punishment,” paints a somber picture of camp life as it investigates crimes that incarcerees inflicted on members of their own community.

The final two episodes of the season tell slightly more upbeat stories about how the community “Americanized” their inmates.

Even with 10 episodes that each run about an hour in length, we are still barely scratching the surface, with many stories left to tell.

“Look Toward The Mountain: Stories From Heart Mountain Incarceration Camp” podcast series is presented by the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation and is funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities. The first two episodes of the series will be released on Feb. 19, with subsequent episodes released in the weeks to come. The series is free and available to the public through Spotify, Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts and other major podcasting platforms.
**CALENDAR**

A NATIONAL GUIDE TO NOTABLE COMMUNITY EVENTS

**DUE TO HEALTH AND SAFETY CONCERNS IN THE U.S. BECAUSE OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, PLEASE CHECK REGARDING THE STATUS OF EVENTS LISTED IN THIS ISSUE’S CALENDAR SECTION.**

### NATIONAL

*Setsuko’s Secret* Series: Post-War Community Advocacy and Political Leadership

Feb. 17, 6-7:15 p.m. PST

Virtual Event
Price: Free

Join Shirley Ann Higuchi, author of *Setsuko’s Secret: Heart Mountain and the Legacy of the Japanese American Incarceration* in this discussion that will also include Assemblymember Warren Furutani, Congressman Mike Honda and Lawyer Dale Minami, moderated by ABC7-TV’s David Ono. This conversation will explore growing up during the activism of the Sansei generation, the redress movement, our current national crisis and where we go from here.

Info: To register, visit https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_Z2eeAmDIQRO2r_2U9DL679TA_fbdciw1dla0VR0Wik43br98BYX7ZTr

Day of Remembrance — ‘What Does It Mean to Be an American?’

Feb. 19; 11 a.m.-Noon

Virtual Event
Price: Free

Join Rev. Duncan Ryuken Williams, Janetsu Tateishi and the Wing Luke Museum Online Digital Content team. This special presentation will be produced by Legion of Honor, JAPAN America Inc., Nikkei History and Nikkei Legacy. This program is presented in collaboration with the Manzanar Committee.

Info: To RSVP, please email yolsgaard@jacl.org or call 213-852-0707 and ask for JACL Financial Support in the email title.

### PSW

Los Angeles DOR ‘Uniting With Other Communities to Keep Democracy Alive’

Los Angeles, CA
Feb. 13; 2 p.m.

Virtual Event
Price: Free

This year’s annual DOR program will feature speakers Mario Perez, Dr. Curtiss Takada Rooks and Maniro Fujimoto Rooks and will be presented on YouTube by the Manzanar Committee. This program is presented by the Go for Broke National Education Center, JACL, PSW, Manzanar Committee, Nikkei for Civil Rights and Redress, Nikkei Progressives, Progressive Asian Network for Action, OCA-Greater LA and Visual Communication.

Info: Email info@jaclpsw.org for more information.

A ‘Remembrance of Names: A Buddhist Monument to the WWII Japanese American Incarceration’ Program

Arizona, CA
Feb. 19; 3-4:30 p.m.

Virtual Event
Price: Free

Join Rev. Dyanca Ryeken Williams in this virtual talk that will explore how the incarceration experiences of Japanese American Buddhists offer a way to heal and repair America’s racial and religious fractures that endure in different ways, even in the present. Williams will also outline a major new initiative to remember the names of those incarcerated in the form of a Buddhist monument that he is creating.

Info: Visit duncanryekenwilliams.com for more information.

Japanese Cooking for Beginners with Azusa Oda: Chirashi Zushi

Japanese Cooking for Beginners with Azusa Oda: Chirashi Zushi

Feb. 21; 4-6 p.m. CST

Virtual Event
Price: $20 Member; $25 General

This hands-on seminar is presented by CGJACL Board Member Samia Husain, who is a vp at Wells Fargo in Analytics and Research. The discussion will allow attendees to learn more about how to value a stock, how to choose between stocks and how to diversify your portfolio, among the highlights.

Info: To RSVP, please email ygotsagaard@jacl.org or call 213-852-0707 and ask for JACL Financial Support in the email title.

### PNW

Day of Remembrance: ‘Redress and Reparations: Yesterday and Today’

Portland, OR
Feb. 20; 2-3:30 p.m.

Virtual Event
Price: Free

Join Portland JACL and the Vancouver NAACP for this program that will honor and reflect on the Japanese American Redress Movement and present perspectives from local leaders on the present-day struggle for reparations for Black Americans. A special presentation will be presented by Peggy Nagae, who will be joined by panelists Bridgette Fahrbuhl, Cameron Whitten and Carmen Roberts.

Info: Registration is required to receive the Zoom link. Please RSVP by Feb. 18 at tinyurl.com/PFDOR2021.

### EDC

Webinar Interview with Kathy Matsui: ‘Japanese Americans & Japan — Legacies’

East Coast
Feb. 16; 7 p.m. EST

Virtual Presentation
Price: Free

This video series highlights the careers and life journeys of prominent Japanese American leaders who are pioneers in developing U.S.-Japan relationships. This interview will feature Kathy Matsui, chair of the U.S.-Japan Council Board of Councilors.


Japan Society of Boston Free Online Resources

Boston, MA

Virtual classes and information
Price: Free

The Japan Society of Boston is offering free online resources featuring Japanese language learning tools, Japanese cooking, origami, arts and lectures and much more, all in a virtual online capacity.

Info: Visit https://japansocietyboston.wildapricot.org

### MDC

Twin Cities Day of Remembrance Program ‘Conscience and the Constitution’

Minnesota
Feb. 21, 4-6 p.m. CST

Virtual Event
Price: Free

The Twin Cities JACL presents its annual program that will include a screening of “Conscience and the Constitution,” an hourlong, award-winning PBS documentary that tells the story of the draft resistance movement at Heart Mountain during World War II. A dialogue on the contemporary significance of the film will follow the screening featuring Frank Abe, the film’s writer/producer/director, and Jaylani Hussein, executive director of the Minnesota chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR).

Info: To register for the program, please visit https://tinyurl.com/DOB21.

‘Rigthing Historical Wrongs: Connecting Black Reparations and Japanese American Redress’

Chicago, IL
Feb. 21, 2 p.m. CST

Virtual Event
Price: Free

This year’s program will feature author John Tateishi and Alderman Robin Rue Simmons. Tateishi was JACL’s redress director and helped develop the organization’s redress proposal. Fordham University’s Robin’s Fifth Ward and helped pass the nation’s first reparations bill, which uses cannabis taxes to address historic and ongoing anti-Black racial discrimination. Josina Morita, commissioner of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District, will lead a follow-up discussion.

Info: For more information, visit https://chicagotor.com

### NCWP

San Jose’s 41st Annual DOR Program ‘Confronting Race in America: Unifying Our Communities’

San Jose, CA
Feb. 14; 3-4 p.m.

Virtual Event
Price: Free

Join Shirley Ann Higuchi, author of *Setsuko’s Secret: Heart Mountain and the Legacy of the Japanese American Incarceration* in this discussion that will also include Assemblymember Warren Furutani, Congressman Mike Honda and Lawyer Dale Minami, moderated by ABC7-TV’s David Ono. This conversation will explore growing up during the activism of the Sansei generation, the redress movement, our current national crisis and where we go from here.

Info: To register, visit https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_Z2eeAmDIQRO2r_2U9DL679TA_fbdciw1dla0VR0Wik43br98BYX7ZTr

Day of Remembrance — ‘What Does It Mean to Be an American?’

Feb. 19; 11 a.m.-Noon

Virtual Event
Price: Free

Join Rev. Duncan Ryeken Williams, Janetsu Tateishi and the Wing Luke Museum Online Digital Content team. This special presentation will be produced by Legion of Honor, JAPAN America Inc., Nikkei History and Nikkei Legacy. This program is presented in collaboration with the Manzanar Committee.

Info: To RSVP, please email yolsgaard@jacl.org or call 213-852-0707 and ask for JACL Financial Support in the email title.

**CALENDAR SECTION**

**PRODUCT FOR MAXIMUM EXPOSURE**

Events in the calendar section are listed based on space availability. Place a Spotlight ad with photos of your event for maximum exposure.

**FOR MORE INFO:**

pc@pacificcitizen.org

(213) 620-1767
Dr. Kiyoto Arakawa passed away peacefully in his sleep at home while battling cancer and COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease). Although Kyoto (Kyio) spent most of his adult life on the mid-peninsula, he was born in Fresno, Calif., during the Great Depression to immigrant parents from Japan. Kyio grew up on his family’s grape ranch that was built on land homesteaded by his father. He spent most of his childhood in the shadow of the Sierras, where he developed a deep love of nature. Fresno was home except for four years spent in internment camps during WWII. After returning from being interned and upon graduating from Washington Union High School in Fresno, he entered UC Berkeley, where he met Jeanette Omi, who was to become his wife of 64 years. They married in 1948. Kubota was awarded a Regent’s Alumni Scholarship to the University of Michigan, died Friday, Jan. 15, 2021, in Phoenix, Ariz., at 90. Kubota was born in Summer, Wash., in 1930 to Nui and Sadao Kubota. In 1942 the family was evacuated to the war relocation camp in Minidoka, Idaho. In 1945 Kubota’s family relocated to Detroit’s east side, where he attended Pershing High School, graduating in 1948. Kubota was awarded a Regent’s Alumni Scholarship to the University of Michigan. He received the non-academic scholarship because his civil and constitutional rights were violated by the U.S. government by sending him to an internment camp during the war. He went on to earn a bachelor of science degree in electrical engineering. Following graduation he was drafted and placed in the U.S. Signal Corps, serving stateside for two years. From there he began a career in microwave electronics. While visiting friends in Chicago in 1951, he met Tomoye (Toby) Ozone, who he married in 1954. Their children are Bill (Sharon MacDonell), Susan and Bob (Iline Takiguchi) and two grandchildren, Patti and Suzi. While working in Michigan, he joined a Detroit start-up company, Omni Spectra Inc. which relocated to New Hampshire in 1975. Kubota rose to the position of vice president of Engineering at MA/COM Omni. He was recruited in 1983 by a company in Glendale, Ariz., and after a brief period he accepted a position with Southwest Microwave Inc. in Tempe, Ariz., as vice president & general manager of its Microwave Products Division. He retired from Southwest Microwave Inc in 2008. After coming to Phoenix he became interested in honoring Nisei soldiers who were killed in action during WWII. He learned several camp had erected historical markers but the nearby Gila River camp did not have one, so he was appointed to create them. Two were built. He constructed the first one in 1995 at the camp site for the Gila River 50-year camp reunion. The second one was built in 2006 for the National JACL Convention held in Phoenix, Ariz. A contest was promoted, seeking a design and then he organized and constructed the monument. It stands at the now-closed Gila River Community Arts & Crafts Center. It remains at that site. Kubota spoke of the pleasure he gained from many camp tours he led, some with Mas Inoshita also of Phoenix, who was held in Gila River and served in the Military Intelligence Service during World War II. Kubota enjoyed meeting many former internees and families, hearing their memories about their lives during those years of incarceration.
New research has shown that the fast-spreading United Kingdom coronavirus variant has more symptoms than those infected with the original strain of the virus. According to experts, people who test positive for the variant are more likely to report a persistent cough, tiredness, muscle aches, sore throat and fever compared to those who have the original strain.

Patients infected with the U.K. variant were significantly less likely to report a loss of the sense of taste or smell, which are symptoms that we have been reading and hearing about in the news.

The U.K. variant, known as B.1.1.7, was first detected in September and has since spread rapidly around the world. It is circulating in at least 28 U.S. states and growing as of press time. It has been reported that the new variant is 40 percent–70 percent more transmissible than the original coronavirus strain. It could become the dominant strain in the U.S. by March, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Preliminary studies suggest the current Covid-19 vaccines will be effective against the B.1.1.7 strain.

U.K. Variant Symptoms
Cough was the most common symptom in those infected with the new variant, reported by 35 percent. The other common symptoms were fatigue/weakness (32 percent), headache (32 percent), muscle aches (25 percent), sore throat (22 percent) and fever (22 percent). Only about 15 percent with the new variant reported a loss of taste or smell, compared to 19 percent of those infected with the original coronavirus.

Top symptoms reported by patients in the United Kingdom:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SYMPTOM</th>
<th>VARIANT</th>
<th>ORIGINAL STRAIN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cough</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fatigue/</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weakness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headache*</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muscle Aches</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sore Throat</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fever</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of Taste</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of Smell</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Difference between variant and original strain is within the statistical margin of error.

The CDC is also tracking new coronavirus strains discovered in South Africa and Brazil. These variants are being tracked by scientists, since they seem to spread quickly and have the potential to become much more dominant.

In addition to getting the vaccine, the best way to protect yourself against the new variants is to continue to follow the same precautions that protect against the original coronavirus strain: Wear two masks, wash your hands, practice social distancing, avoid crowds and stay home if at all possible.

For the latest coronavirus news and advice, visit aarp.org/coronavirus.

Ron Mori is a member of the Washington, D.C., JACL chapter and manager of community, states and national affairs — multicultural leadership for AARP.

---

**THE U.K. VARIANT**

**By Ron Mori**

**SYMPTOM** | **VARIANT** | **ORIGINAL STRAIN**
---|---|---
Cough | 35% | 28%
Fatigue/ Weakness | 32% | 29%
Headache* | 32% | 30%
Muscle Aches | 25% | 21%
Sore Throat | 22% | 19%
Fever | 22% | 20%
Loss of Taste | 16% | 19%
Loss of Smell | 15% | 19%

*Difference between variant and original strain is within the statistical margin of error.

---

**Judd Matsunaga’s**
**ELDER LAW SERVICES OF CALIFORNIA**
A Professional Law Corporation

- Medi-Cal Planning
- Asset Protection for Long-Term Care
- Living Trusts & Wills
- Powers of Attorney
- Trust Administration
- Probate

Home & Hospital Appointments Available!

Multiple Office Locations
Torrance • Los Angeles (LAX) • Pasadena
Enicno • Fountain Valley • Westlake Village
Valencia • Palm Springs • San Diego • San Jose

www.elderlawcalifornia.com
800-403-6078

---

**Mobile Banking:**
**App is New & Improved**

1. User Friendly – access your account with fingerprint or facial recognition.
2. Apply for a Loan – one of the quickest, easiest loan applications you’ll find!
3. Convenience – added cross account and money transfers.
4. Easy Access – links to credit card portal, bill pay and remote deposit.

It’s free, easy, secure, and available 24/7/365!

National JACL Credit Union
Download the app today!
800-544-8828 www.jaclcu.com